



Gníomhaireacht Bainistíochta an Chisteáin Náisiúnta
National Treasury Management Agency

An Ghníomhaireacht um Éilimh ar an Stát
State Claims Agency



Association of Community
and Comprehensive Schools
Cumann na Scoileanna Pobail
agus Cuimsitheacha

State Claims Agency Student Work Experience Programme Guide

In association with the Association of
Community and Comprehensive Schools

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1.0 Introduction

Work experience programmes provide students with valuable experience of the work environment and help students gain practical experience, help them make career choices and build their industry skills. Work experience is often the first time that many students experience the work environment, and good preparation and organisation of work experience programmes is essential if these opportunities are to be rewarding and safe. This guidance document will assist Community and Comprehensive Schools in preparing for work experience programmes and ensure the necessary risk management controls are in place.

Benefits to students

Work experience programmes provide students with an opportunity to:

- Observe a variety of tasks being completed in the workplace.
- Enhance their knowledge and understanding and prepare them for the world of work.
- Undertake supervised work appropriate to their skill level.
- Evaluate industries that are of interest to them.
- Explore potential career paths.
- Develop skills for future employment.

Benefits to host employers

Participating in work experience programmes provides employers with an opportunity to:

- Participate in the education and career development of young people in the community.
- Assist young people in evaluating potential career paths.
- Identify young people with potential for their industry and develop future recruitment channels.
- Strengthen their links with the community and raise their business profile.
- Increase the supervisory, training and mentoring skills of their staff.

Work experience programmes

- **Transition Year:** Students partake in work experience as part of Transition Year. Some schools complete the work experience over two weeks while others complete the work experience one day per week over the course of the school year.
- **Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP):** LCVP is an additional intervention within the Leaving Certificate. It aims to foster in students a spirit of enterprise and initiative and to develop their interpersonal, vocational and technological skills. Work experience is as an optional module of the LCVP and lasts for one week.
- **Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA):** LCA programme students are required to complete two modules of work experience over the two-year programme. Some schools complete the work experience over two weeks while others perform the work experience one day per week over the course of the school year.
- **Post Leaving Certificate (PLC):** PLC is a full-time programme for students who have completed their leaving certificate to develop skills for an industry recognized qualification. Students often engage in work experience programmes which are either blocked over a number of weeks or some students attend work experience one day per week.

2.0 Roles and Responsibilities

School roles and responsibilities

- Assess the suitability of students to partake in each programme.
- Ensure the work experience is suitable for the student in question and be satisfied that the student will not be exposed to foreseeable risks of injury or harm.
- Name a person who acts as the school's contact in supervising and coordinating work experience.
- In advance of the work experience, brief students on:
 - the aims of the work experience.
 - their responsibilities while on work experience.
 - acceptable standards of behaviour.
 - the types of activities they are not to partake in.
 - the procedures to follow should they have any difficulties while on work experience.
 - disciplinary procedures.
- Define the learning outcomes of the work experience in terms of knowledge, skills and competencies to be acquired and to give the host employer information on objectives and requirements set for the work experience.
- Ensure that action is taken immediately if a complaint has been made by the host employer or the student.
- Ensure that host employers have a safety statement, risk assessments and insurance in place.
- Inform the host employer of any medical conditions which may affect the safety and health of the student while on work experience.
- Provide the host employer with emergency contact details.

Host employer roles and responsibilities

- Provide a safe workplace environment.
- Assign tasks and responsibilities to students to match their ability and learning objectives and ensure that appropriate equipment and support is available.
- Ensure that tasks the student is involved in are adequately risk assessed and the necessary controls implemented. This duty is no more onerous than the everyday requirement for employers to risk assess employee activities. While a school continues to have responsibility for students on work experience, the host employer has the same responsibilities for their safety and health whilst the student is on an employer's premises.
- Garda clearance/vetting may be required in certain circumstances – requirement should be identified in the risk assessment. See pre-work experience assessment checklist on page 18.
- Students should be appropriately supervised at all times, subject to the outcome of the risk assessment and based on the fact that these students do not have the required knowledge, formal training or experience.
- Work experience students must receive, at minimum, appropriate induction training. Students must not undertake, or be required to undertake, any activity or duty that would require additional training e.g. operate machinery/equipment etc. irrespective of personal experiences outside of these programmes.
- As some students undertaking work experience will be under the age of 18 years and in some cases, may be under 16 years, host employers should ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities under the *'Protection of Young Persons (Employment) Act 1996', Schedule 7 of the Safety, Health and Welfare (General Application) Regulations 2007'* and child protection legislation, etc.
- Ensure that the work experience fulfils the needs of the student.
- Have an adequate safety statement and insurance cover in place.

- Immediately report any accidents involving the student to the school.
- Alert the school of any potential problems with the work experience.
- Complete a work experience evaluation form at the end of the programme.

Student roles and responsibilities

- Abide by the rules and regulations of the host employer, its normal working hours, code of conduct and rules of confidentiality, etc.
- Take care of their own safety and health, and that of others who may be affected by their actions.
- Ensure all relevant forms are completed in consultation with the school and the host employer.
- Do not partake in any activities that require specialist training irrespective of personal experiences outside of these programmes.
- Follow instruction, use any safety equipment that has been provided and take part in relevant training.
- Raise any safety and health concerns with the host employer and school contact person and inform them about any accidents or illness which you think may be work related.

3.0 State Indemnity and Insurance

State indemnity

Under the [National Treasury Management Agency \(Amendment\) Act, 2000](#) the management of personal injury and third party property damage claims associated with Community and Comprehensive Schools is delegated to the National Treasury Management Agency (NTMA). The NTMA also provides related risk management services. When performing these functions, the NTMA is known as the [State Claims Agency \(SCA\)](#).

Therefore, Community and Comprehensive Schools do not purchase insurance for personal injury and third-party property damage and do not have to bear associated premium costs as they are covered for these risks through State indemnity. This indemnity works on a pay as you go basis so that all costs associated with personal injury and third-party property damage claims will be paid directly from the Department of Education and Skills budget through a reimbursement system operated by the SCA. The key principles of State indemnity are set out below:

- The State indemnity is unlimited in amount.
- State indemnity only applies in instances where a Community and Comprehensive School is negligent.
- State indemnity is not like conventional insurance; it is enshrined in legislation and therefore will not have a policy number or an expiry date and there is no requirement to name indemnified parties.
- A State indemnity confirmation statement is issued as proof of State indemnity in lieu of an insurance policy.
- Please refer to the *Governance Manual for Community and Comprehensive Schools* for further information on State indemnity.

Host employers' insurance

While State indemnity indemnifies Community and Comprehensive Schools for claims associated with the school's negligence, it does not extend to cover the negligence of host employers. Host employers are, as is normal practice, responsible for their own negligence and should have insurance in place to cover such risks. The host employer is in control of their workplace and the activities undertaken therein. It is expected that host employers have adequate employer's liability (not required where self-employed) and public liability insurance in place.

Personal accident insurance

Personal accident insurance is a no-fault compensation policy that is taken out by parents, usually through a scheme managed by the school, which, for a small premium covers certain upfront medical costs in the event of an injury sustained by their child. Personal accident policies are not based on negligence and pay when a certain event occurs, provided it was not a deliberate act on the part of the claimant. The SCA recommends that all students avail of this cover. Community and Comprehensive Schools should ensure that the personal accident insurance cover extends to cover students while on work experience.

Jurisdiction and territorial limits

State indemnity jurisdiction limits are in accordance with the Jurisdiction of Courts and Enforcements of Judgments Acts of the Republic of Ireland. There are no jurisdiction or territorial limits in respect of students/staff participating in work experience abroad as part of their school's work experience programme. However, each student should have their own travel and personal accident insurance cover in place for the country they are visiting.

Risk management services provided by the State Claims Agency

The SCA provides a risk management service to Community and Comprehensive Schools. If a Community and Comprehensive School is uncertain as to whether State indemnity applies or risk management guidance is required, please contact the Enterprise Risk Management Unit at stateclaims@ntma.ie

4.0 Managing Work Experience Programmes

The work experience programme is often the first time that many students experience the work environment, and good preparation and organisation of work experience is essential if these opportunities are to be rewarding and safe. The general duty of care which schools owe to their students extends to the arranging of work experience and schools, therefore, have a responsibility to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety and health of its students. Schools are responsible for deciding if the work experience is suitable, preparing students for workplace learning, monitoring the student's progress and welfare during the work experience and following up with them afterwards. The steps outlined below ensure that the necessary risk management controls are implemented when organising work experience programmes.

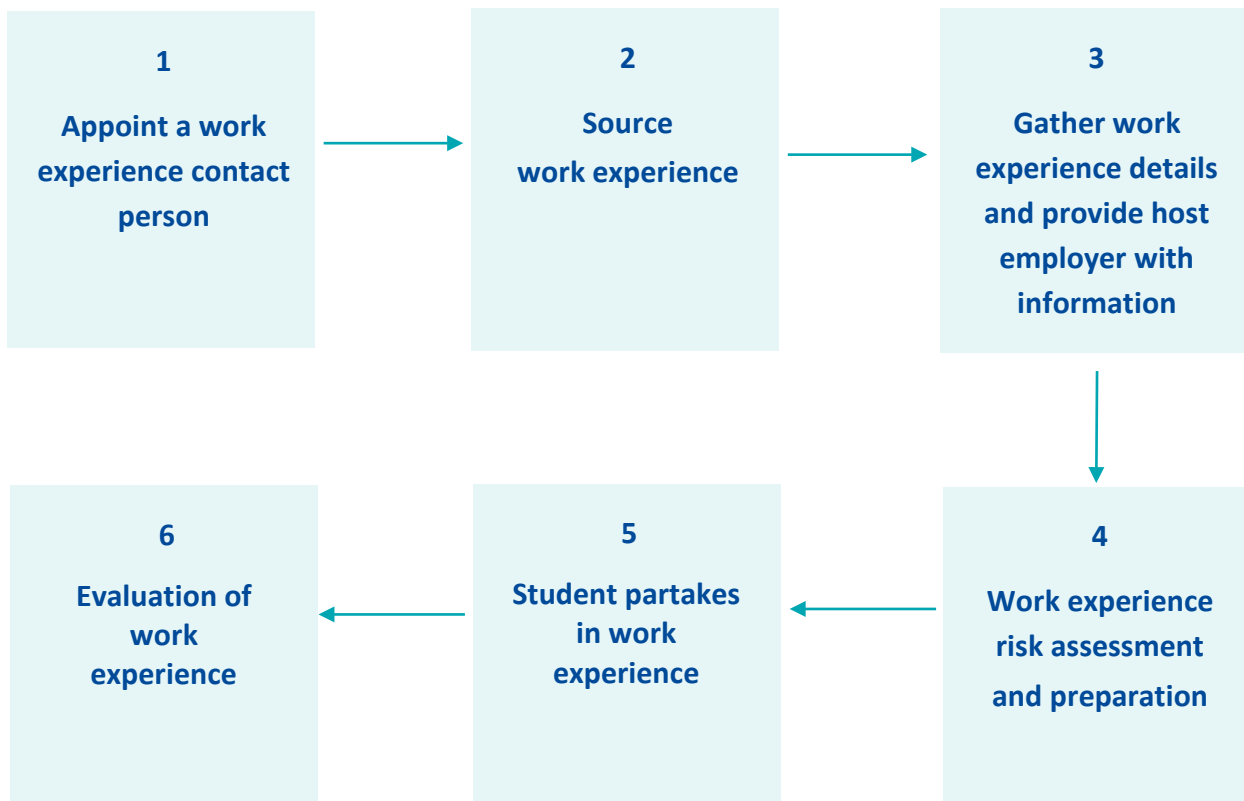


Figure 1: Key steps to organise and manage work experience

Step 1: Appoint a work experience contact person

Schools should appoint a contact person for each work experience programme. The contact person is responsible for ensuring each student's work experience is planned and organised appropriately. It may be necessary to appoint more than one contact person, depending on the number of students participating in a work experience programme.

Step 2: Source work experience

Each school will have procedures in place for sourcing work experience. Some schools encourage students to source their own work experience while other schools have developed partnerships with employers in the community. Where students source their own work experience, this must be formally approved by the school.

Step 3: Gather work experience details and provide host employer with information

It is recommended that a 'Work Experience Summary Sheet' contained in Appendix B is completed for each student's work experience. This ensures that all relevant information relating to work experience is collected.

The 'Work Experience Summary Sheet' records:

- A. Student details.
- B. Parent/Guardian details.
- C. School details.
- D. Host employer details.
- E. Specific details including the duration of the work experience, hours of work, type of work experience and tasks to be performed etc.

Sections A, B and C should be completed by the school, in consultation with the student, and signed off. The student/school contact person should then forward the sheet to the host employer. The host employer completes sections D and E of the 'Work Experience Summary Sheet', signs it and returns it to the school contact person directly or via the student. At this stage, the host employer should be provided with a copy of the 'Host Employers' Guidance Leaflet' (Appendix A) and a copy of the 'State indemnity Confirmation Statement'.

The host employer should keep a copy for their records. **Work experience should not proceed until the form has been returned to the school contact person.**

Step 4: Work experience risk assessment and preparation

Prior to work experience commencing, the 'Pre-Work Experience Risk Assessment Checklist' contained in Appendix C should be completed. This checklist assists schools in ensuring all relevant procedures have been implemented.

Assess the suitability of each student's work experience:

Schools have a duty of care to ensure that the work experience is suitable for the student in question. Based on the details provided in the 'Work Experience Summary Sheet', the school must assess if the tasks outlined are suitable for the student and must be satisfied that:

- the work experience will fulfil the learning needs of the student.
- the student will not be exposed to foreseeable risks of injury or harm.

Child protection risks should also be considered in accordance with the school's child protection policy. The definition of a child is anyone under the age of 18. There is a requirement for any person engaged in relevant work with children to be Garda vetted.

Work experience where the nature of the experience means that a child will be working alone with an adult for long periods should be avoided.

High risk activities such as those listed below should be avoided or prior approval sought from the SCA:

- Work in atomic or nuclear energy installations or plants.
- Aviation work or work in airports (this does not apply to ground operational duties which do not involve work airside e.g. airport refreshment lounge).
- Work in mines, collieries or quarries.
- Work in ship breaking or ship repairing yards.
- Tunnelling or work in sewers.

- Stevedoring or dock-side risks.
- Any work in connection with explosives.
- Work in gas works or filling of any gas into cylinder.
- Tree felling or lopping.
- Excavations below three metres in depth; height work in excess of five metres.
- Work in reservoirs.
- Work on boats or trawlers.
- Work in equestrian centres and/or participation in show jumping/horse riding activities but not excluding grooming horses under supervision, cleaning out empty stables once horses have been removed, cleaning tack and clerical duties in connection with the stables.

Student briefings:

In advance of the work experience, the school should brief students on:

- the aims of the work experience.
- the student's responsibilities while on work experience.
- the types of activities they are not to partake in.
- the procedures to follow should they have any difficulties while on work experience.

Each student should be provided with a copy of the completed '*Work Experience Summary Sheet*'.

Insurance:

It is expected that host employers have adequate employer's liability (not required where self-employed) and public liability insurance in place. The recommended acceptable indemnity limits for employer's liability cover would normally be €12.7 million and the recommended limit for public liability cover would normally be €6.5 million.

Step 5: Student partakes in work experience

The main responsibility for the safety and health of the student whilst on work experience rests with the host employer. Host employers must ensure that the activities a student is partaking in are risk-assessed and the appropriate controls implemented. The requirement to risk-assess student tasks is no more onerous than the everyday requirement for employers to risk assess employee activities. Students should only be instructed to partake in activities which match their abilities and learning objectives. Students while on work experience should always be classified as students and should not at any time be considered as an additional staff member. Host employers should provide students with a safety induction which includes at a minimum (not an exhaustive list):

- Briefing on risks associated with work activities and the associated controls.
- Emergency procedures.
- Accident reporting procedures.
- Restricted areas.
- Tasks they are not permitted to do.

Step 6: Evaluation of work experience

Work experience should be evaluated in accordance with the work experience programme the student is participating in.

5.0 Accident Reporting

- Host employers must notify the school immediately of any accidents involving the students which occur during work experience.
- The school should ensure that the normal accident reporting procedures are followed and ensure that the student's parents are made aware of the incident.
- Under the National Treasury Management Agency (Amendment) Act, 2000, Community and Comprehensive Schools have a statutory duty to [report all accidents relating to school activities](#) to the SCA within a reasonable period of time. This statutory requirement extends to work experience. All incidents should be reported via the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and details of the incident investigation can be input into the incident investigation page. If you are having difficulty accessing NIMS, please contact the NIMS Helpdesk on 01 2384240 or NIMSHelpdesk@ntma.ie
- In instances where the student requires medical treatment by a registered medical practitioner, the accident must be reported to the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) by the host employer. Accidents can be reported to the HSA online on their [website](#).
- When keeping or processing records, in particular personal data relating to individuals, the requirements under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) are required to be met. Please see ACCS Data Protection Policy for Schools for further information, available [here](#).

Appendix A: Host Employers' Guidance Leaflet

Dear Host Employer,

Thank you for considering facilitating work experience for our student which will take place from ___/___/___ to ___/___/___ . The work experience will provide the student with valuable experience of the work environment and help them gain practical experience, assist their career choices and build their industry skills. The school community is deeply appreciative of the opportunities provided.

Please see a 'Work Experience Summary Sheet' attached which contains key details relating to the work experience including:

- A. Student details
- B. Parent/Guardian details
- C. School contact details

Can you please complete sections 'D. Host Employer Details' and 'E. Work Experience Details' of the 'Work Experience Summary Sheet' and return a signed copy to the school directly or via the student.

Please find some guidance on the work experience programme below. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any queries in relation to the programme.

What is work experience?

Work experience in post-primary schools is a short-term placement of students with local employers during the school year. The work experience is organised by the school authorities, in association with the student, and is an integral part of the student's educational programme.

What are the benefits to host employers?

Participating in work experience programmes provide host employers with an opportunity to:

- Participate in the education and career development of young people in the community.
- Assist young people in evaluating potential career paths and develop future recruitment channels.
- Strengthen your links with the community and raise your business profile.

What are the benefits to students?

Work experience programmes provide students with an opportunity to:

- Observe a variety of tasks being completed in the workplace.

- Enhance their knowledge and understanding and prepare them for the world of work.

What are my roles and responsibilities as the host employer?

- Provide a safe workplace environment and appropriate supervision for the student.
- Assign tasks and responsibilities to students to match their ability and learning objectives.
- Ensure that tasks the student is involved in are adequately risk assessed and the necessary controls implemented. This duty is no more onerous than the everyday requirement for employers to risk-assess employee activities.
- Ensure that an induction is provided to the student including instruction and details on the appropriate tasks, emergency procedures, special arrangements e.g. uniform, protective clothing etc.
- Report any accidents involving the student to the school contact person immediately.

What activities should students not partake in?

Students should not partake in the activities which:

- Are beyond their physical or psychological capacity.
- Involve the use of specialist machinery or equipment.
- Require specialised training.

Are students covered by insurance while on work placement?

Community and Comprehensive Schools are State indemnified which extends to cover work experience. This means the school will be indemnified by the State in respect of all claims for personal injury and third-party property damage, arising from the negligence of the school. Please see a State indemnity Confirmation Statement attached which operates in lieu of an insurance policy. As State indemnity is enshrined in legislation, the State indemnity Confirmation Statement does not stipulate a period of cover as it is effective from the date issued. Employers who provide work experience for students should confirm that it is appropriate with their insurer. Most students have personal accident insurance which provides cover for medical costs in the event of an accidental injury.

Yours sincerely,
School Principal

Appendix B: Work Experience Summary Sheet

- Sections A, B and C to be completed by the school, in consultation with the student and a signed version forwarded to the host employer.
- Sections D and E are then to be completed by the host employer and signed and returned to the school contact person directly or via the student. The host employer should retain a completed version for their records.

A. Student Details		B. Parent/Guardian Details	
Student name:		Parent/Guardian name:	
Student address:		Parent/Guardian address:	
		Parent/Guardian mobile number:	
Student has personal accident cover: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Parent/Guardian work number:	
Relevant student medical conditions:			

C. School Details	
School name:	School phone number:
School address:	School email:
	Contact person name:
	Contact person work phone number:
	Contact person work email:
School insurance details:	State indemnified.

D. Host Employer Details (to be completed by Host Employer)	
Host employer:	Host employer phone number:
Host employer address:	Contact person name:
	Contact person role:
	Contact person phone number:
	Contact person email:
Host employer insurance details:	Public liability: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Employers liability: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <small>The school may request copies of such insurance documentation.</small>

E. Work Experience Details (to be completed by Host Employer)	
Work experience programme:	
Type of work experience:	Hours of work
Description of tasks to be performed:	

Please confirm that the following documents have been provided to the host employer:

- Host Employers Guidance Leaflet State indemnity Confirmation Statement

Signed: _____ Student	Date: _____
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Signed: _____ Parent/Guardian	Date: _____
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Signed: _____ School contact person	Date: _____
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Signed: _____ On behalf of the Host Employer	Date: _____
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Appendix C: Pre-Work Experience Risk Assessment Checklist

The checklist below should be completed by the school contact person for each work experience. The checklist assists in ensuring that all relevant procedures are in place before work experience proceeds. Work experience should not proceed until the school contact person is satisfied that all requirements are in place.

Requirement	Y	N
- A work experience summary sheet (Appendix B) outlining details of the student, parent/guardian, school, host employer and work experience has been completed and signed off.		
- Based on the tasks outlined on the work experience summary sheet, the work experience is suitable for the student in question.		
- The host employer has been informed of any relevant medical conditions which may affect the safety and health of the student while on work experience.		
- The student has been briefed on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the aims of the work experience. - the student's responsibilities while on work experience. - the types of activities they are not to partake in. - the procedures to follow should they have any difficulties while on work experience. 		
- The host employer has been provided with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the work experience summary sheet. - 'Host Employers Guidance Leaflet'. - 'State indemnity Confirmation Statement'. 		
- The host employer has employers' liability and public liability insurance in place.		
- The host employer has ensured anyone engaging in work with the work experience student has been Garda Vetted*.		
- Depending on whether the student will be engaged in work with children or vulnerable people there is a requirement for the school, through the ACCS (Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools) and with parental consent, to organise vetting of the student. For example, if working in a childcare setting, a primary school or care setting.		

All of the above requirements set out are in place and the experience can proceed: Yes No

Signed: _____

On behalf of the School

Date

*There is a requirement for any person engaged in relevant work with children to be Garda Vetting. The definition of a child is anyone under the age of 18.



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